

**Chief of Naval Operations
Adm. Jonathan Greenert
Delivers remarks at the National Naval Officers Association
July 26, 2012**

Admiral Greenert: Thank you very much for inviting me here today. This is very special. Frankly, I'm pretty nervous about talking to [inaudible]. The dangerous part is you get into [inaudible]. But I've been thinking about this for quite some time, and I hope we can have a conversation. This is a very impressive group that you have here. Impressive organization. Again, glad to be here. In the city of the 2013 Super Bowl. Very very exciting.

I'm very happy to be down here and scope the place out a little bit for when I return. But this [inaudible], and we see my Steelers in the Super Bowl.

Anyway, happy 40th Anniversary. I think that is a magnificent logo. It says so much in such simple terms, and this organization, as the Chaplain said, I think in the blessing, started by courageous pioneers, people who were willing to stand up and say we need to do something and we need to do more. We need to do risk adversity. And that takes a lot of courage. Everybody else out there said hey, we're alright - What needs to be done? And get on and establish, I guess I'd call it constant. [Inaudible], and get the diversity thing second nature, in human resources, in human capital.

You have a busy schedule here, I've looked it over. I tip the hat. I think what you're doing is quite relevant, to bring all these kids to me now, together, and say how do we develop, what do I do next, what's in my best interest, and what will it matter? Diversity topics and community professional development is exceptional.

This conference has legs. It's going places, we have conferences that are under review now. They are. You know that. And that's going to be our [inaudible]. It's just the way it's going to be. But don't worry about it. Work through it and you'll be fine and work out. It's relevant, it's important, it's got a return on investment. And we'll be just fine.

With all the success stories, it is [inaudible]. I remember coming here, here to a conference back in Virginia a couple of years ago, and I never heard of a place called [Hot Coffee], Mississippi. So there was a innocent (gentlemen). I said where are you from? [Hot Coffee], Mississippi. I go no, really? [Hot Coffee], Mississippi. I said no, I've got coffee. What are you talking about? But this young man has done well. I'm very proud of him. He's got a fellowship now on Capitol Hill. So now he really knows how things get done. We'll talk later. He said hey, how about becoming the CNO? I said we'll talk, I'll show you how to do that.

These are challenging times, no kidding. And we have the unexpected coming. They're coming. We've got to reassess our missions. What is most important? So we are going to need strong leaders. We need diversity in a big way, as laid across the board. As do my predecessors who came up here and spoke.

So it's an inflection point on a number of things. Fiscally, the budgets are going to change. It's good. The nation's budgets are going to change.

Strategically, the change is in the MidEast, right? Out of Iraq, moving towards the end in Afghanistan. Would love to get out of the Arabian Gulf. That's not our future for a while. We're going to be there for a while. And we are rebalancing to the Asia Pacific. That's a strategic change, it's taking place.

Operationally, the things that are important. The mission that we do at least as a Navy are evolving, very much so. And we need, there is an evolution of talent that we need in our service. Talent that is not race, gender and all that. I'm talking cyber, IT. I'm talking electronics. Talking a renewed emphasis on acoustics and different domains. It's evolving as we move. So there's a lot of dynamic going around here.

But through it all, my opinion, what I've laid out for those of you that, some are in Khaki in the Navy and some are wearing the whites. I think to look through this we need to put on a couple of sets of linens here and say look. Right now the warfighting has to be first. Because if we can't get that done, then we will not be successful, and that's what we owe to this country. That's how this country will evaluate us, if we are effective warfighters. That means a lot of things to a lot of different people. We need [inaudible], washing dishes out there. It's very interesting on an aircraft carrier. I go in there and was talking and my executive assistant said kid, what does your job have to do with this ship? Why are you doing this? He said, so that we can launch 30 strikes a day and take care of our brothers and sisters in Afghanistan. So this is somebody that understands what they're doing and where all the jobs fit in. Warfighting is first.

We need to operate forward, to get the leverage of what our ships and aircraft, predominantly the ships can get out and about the world. Go look at our history. We are most effective when we are forward. And we need to be ready. We need to have confidence. So [efficient] people, sailors out there operating with both confident and accountable leaders to lead them in order to get the work done out there. We need team work, we need talent, we need imagination -- and we get that through our schools.

So I'll talk a little bit about what I see out there. I had an "aha" moment in April. And after, there's some hope for me. And it really was, a lot of it was put on or put together by my friend and classmate Kerwin Miller who is here today. He arranged for me to have lunch with Wesley Brown. And I knew he was a famous man because there was a field house named after him and he was living and it's pretty important. If you've got a building named after you and you're still alive, that's pretty big. What if we run Hyman Rickover? Pretty good company.

So we met in my quarters and we had lunch. I learned to appreciate listening to this amazing gentleman, that his time at the United States Naval Academy and my time at the United States Naval Academy were pretty darn different. He overcame insurmountable challenges. I had to get off of my butt and study. He had many challenges that I never had to face. Many of you out there today, I admit it, have challenges I honestly don't understand but I want to understand and we've got to understand because that's how we're going to have to figure out how to get through this together, and nurture and bring the talent that those of you are going to go out and get for us.

That's why you have this organization. And to emerge and become the people who you can be. Meeting Wesley really got me to refocus and appreciate what we need to do in this program- It's really not a program; it's a way of being, of putting together an organization to be most effective.

[You know the story], if you don't, it's an amazing collection of reminiscences, an oral history of Wesley Brown was written by the Naval Institute, if you are ever over at the Academy, or you grew up around people who have it, it's fascinating. I don't really read that stuff, but I picked it up and started going into it, and what an astounding man he was. Always had a positive attitude. He said I want to be an engineer one day and have an engineering degree, and by cracky he did. No matter what the challenges were, he moved ahead through that positive energy that he had, positive outlook, focused outlook on where to get. So his journey enabled diversity at our United States Naval Academy. And if you look at it today, there's no pretty good I think in that area. But again, he would tell you, 'hey look I didn't do anything special', but he does exemplify the importance of diversity.

We need to recognize talent. We need to bring perspectives into our Navy. And with that we'll get new enthusiasm. We'll be nurtured, but we'll also be, we'll have nutrients. We'll be refreshed. And I just told you, we need it. We've got dynamic times.

Someone, you go in and you look up Wesley Brown, and he even spoke about this before, he said somebody decided that I was going to be an officer in the Army or an officer in the Navy. A guy named Colonel Becher I think is how you pronounce his name. He was a white guy. He worked at Howard University. He said this is a talented young man. I'm going to be there if the Academy doesn't take him, because he had an appointment to the Academy, nominations. But if that didn't work he was going to be an officer in the Army. The Colonel knew that the Army and the Navy needed this talented man.

That's what we need to do. We need to be smart enough to go out and find where this talent is. Where is this kid, and bring this kid along, and enable this kid to get there. Wesley had issues getting through. They had nothing to do with his race. He was in the Army and the Navy, wanted to get out of the Army and go into the Navy. He got out of the Army before he went into the Navy and the Navy accepted him, he was a civilian again. That wasn't any good, so the colonel had to figure all that out. So he stuck through it all because he saw talent.

This is a key item in my Sailing Directions. I speak to it. I'm going to take that and maybe put it into something more coherent, published a vision pretty soon. My vision statement. I've got some staff working on it. But a few things that will be in that statement I just wanted to mention to you.

One, it's kind of obvious, but we've got to state it and we've got to put it in terms that are coherent. We've got to [recruit people] diverse in race, gender, experience, background and ideas. Now we've got to stay focused on the race/gender piece. I think you all understand that. But there's also background, experience and ideas that we've got to understand too, to get the complete package.

The military needs it. It's necessary. Large organizations need it. We've worked with industry groups (I) spoke about that earlier. They're a great challenge. And it's not about quotas. It's not about goals or necessarily statistics, it's about going out there and getting those that will give their great talent, skills, experience and ideas that we need.

Number two. We need to develop a diverse workforce, once it's on board, and that's where we need to get to work. We do okay. We bring folks in of all different ilk and nature. We say okay, welcome to the Navy, you'll love it. We're going to accelerate your life, we're going to do all kinds of things. They say, how does this work? I've never seen this before. Then we don't pull these folks and say hey talent, come on over here. You work here with me or you work over here, and make sure that we have that opportunity to nurture and bring these folks along. We need to inspire and empower, contribute, lead, inclusive education and economic background. Folks are going to come from all over. They're not going to understand some things about us.

Maximize the ability of the work force to adapt. Allow them to succeed. Fill and sustain and assisting a culture of dignity and respect. That will have to be in here.

Number three, institutionalize the practice of diversity. I'm talking to the leaders out there. I'm talking to my community leaders. I will continue to do that. It has to be more second nature. That you're going to go out and find talent. It's got to be in your head. My vision and my goal, my nirvana would be we don't have necessarily some director for diversity standing there all the time saying you've got to do this and you've got to do that. So it becomes a part of the instruction or the strategy for how we go out and do that.

That's not going to happen overnight. We've got a ways to do that, I understand that. But that's where I think we need to head. It has to be more natural and an accepted element in the process to find the talent. Part of the human resource mission.

When it's institutionalized we won't have to have these special endeavors or what some would call a special personnel program.

I met a guy named Chuck Bush. Anybody know Chuck Bush? Chuck Bush was the first African-American to graduate from the United States Air Force Academy, Class of '63. And he's going to shriek by. Would you not agree, Colonel? This is not a shy man. How do I know him? He's a financial manager. He's a real man. And I'm a financial manager.

Let me give you a few of the thoughts he related to me recently, and I told my community leaders this. He said there are three potential constraints that preclude institutionalizing diversity, and he's speaking for the Air Force, but I think you'll understand this belongs to us.

Number one, tribalism. In the Air Force you've got your fighter pilots, you've got your bomber pilots, you've got your missileers, you've got your UAVs. He said, and of course we've got our restricted line. Restricted line Helo Tactic, amphibians, submariners -- maneuver and attack submarines. As long as we continue to perpetrate that and allow that to have some sort of a hold other than you happen to have a different kind of mentioned in your portfolio where we aren't

mixing and matching at every opportunity, you're setting yourself up for not thinking about diversity.

Number two, there's a lack of transparency in how we view ourselves. We've got to assess, and then you've got to report [inaudible], you've got to face up to. Take courage, you say man, I thought we had, we were there. I thought we were on the right road. Well, you're not. You've got to figure that out and get back to work. It happens all the time in all kinds of things.

Three, lack of accountability. Issues aren't resolved effectively in the Air Force. We have the same issues. We try on something. We confuse activity with progress that is measurable, the measure of effectiveness. And again, honesty is in PACOM. We have it in other areas in our Navy. It is there today. Sexual assault. Absolutely. A lot of activity, but we've got to measure the effectiveness and decide where it's going to go. We'll stay that course. But it's an honest look.

The community leaders are self-assessing. We're talking, they're telling me where they are and what they're going to do about it, and we're counting for that, with each other today. And I should be frank and give them their due. Community leaders. They're out there today. In the Civil Engineer Corps is fusing diversity training in technical training. They're all engineers, they've all got to be engineers, that's the deal. Civil engineers, they're putting diversity training right in there when they're getting the technical training so it's embedded in the early phases.

In the supply area, they have a guidebook for their career. Pretty good book. Admiral Heinrich's got this going around. And they pursue educational opportunity very aggressively. When you take the number of Olmstead Scholars and fill in the blank scholars, and you look at that Corps, it's pretty good.

In aviation, Admiral Myers is developing ways to screen candidates that can more easily have a level playing field. What does that mean? That means, I don't know about you all but I've never been near an airplane as a kid, up through my teenage years. I grew up in Pittsburgh. And I may have gone to an airport, but I wasn't in the cockpit of an airplane. So if somebody says hey, want to be a naval aviator? I'd say oh yeah, sure. I've never been in an airplane. What is that like? Then you go in the first time, and scared and focusing on being in the Navy, there's no level playing field. So he's working on getting folks, including people of different culture and background as an example, in an airplane. Get them in the cockpit. It's kind of fun. 'I should do this, it's something that I wanted to do and now I know I can do.' It's leveling that playing field.

In [inaudible] they have a mentor program to ensure that we don't disadvantage everyone and it is very very judicious, very well done. And at NAVAIR, I've got to tell you, Architzel, he's amazing. He's all over the place in that community and they lead in the diversity efforts there.

So when our commanders come to me with tangible programs, we can get that [down and done]. I haven't seen all the community leaders. We haven't talked about all the best practices, but we'll continue to publish them and put them out there.

There is some success out there. We are decreasing attrition in minorities, in females in many of the communities and that's a good thing. We are having some pilot programs to see if it's viable for folks to start a family if need be or other areas to see what can we do, as I said, to make sure that we are nurturing kids out there that show the talent.

Let me take your Q's and A's and close here to say congratulations on 40 years. This is a very relevant and effective organization. Never forget the pioneers that got you here. NNOA continues to serve a pretty darn important purpose. We'll continue to build the work force, we'll continue to work together and get what we need so we're ready for this next decade ahead. Our ethos, our Navy ethos says we are professional sailors and civilians, a diverse and agile force, exemplifying the highest standards. I ask you to live that.

Let's take your questions.

Question: Good afternoon, sir. I have a few questions. What would you say has been your great [inaudible] in your career, and what has motivated you to stay in as long as you have to [inaudible]? [Inaudible] to stay in past [inaudible]?

Admiral Greenert: What motivated me is working with people. I'm not a real smart guy, never was, and I have the record to prove it. But working with people. Going up and down [inaudible] has been amazing. And this organization, there may be others. The Marine Corps, I'm very proud to be a team mate of the Marine Corps. I kind of know more about it than the other services. But I think the military is [inaudible] aspire to. I stayed, along with my wife -- she likes the military life. Frankly, when I got to the end of [discovery] and I said this is it, I'm ready to retire and [inaudible]. She said I'm not. So that pretty much was it. You marry up.

Question: Sir, you can't go into a room now [inaudible] where sexual assault, [inaudible]. The two kind of go hand in hand. I'm kind of looking at this as a peel back the onion. I'm a supply officer, so I'm hoping my supply brothers don't take off my head, but in the Navy stages, when you go in there, there's a substantial footprint that's being used for alcohol beverages. It's almost a conflict of interest with what [inaudible]. You have sailors [inaudible] exchanges and they see such a large [inaudible] alcoholic beverages being marketed toward them. Is the Navy taking any look at maybe [inaudible]?

Admiral Greenert: I'm glad you brought that up. I used to do that. I did it in 7th Fleet. I'd walk into the exchange and I'd see [inaudible] all the time. Remember [inaudible]? She did Coors and Coors Lite. I'd say what the hell is that buyer doing here in August? She said it's [inaudible] Halloween. [Inaudible]. So I'm kind of with you. [Inaudible] thing down [inaudible]. [Inaudible]. I don't know. Let me take that back. [Inaudible] sales and get into all that. There's also a balance. [Inaudible]. You shouldn't be out [inaudible]. I'll look at it. Thank you very much.

Question: Good afternoon, sir. My question to you sir is how do you [inaudible]?

Admiral Greenert: [Inaudible]? I'm not an expert at, I've been at this for maybe six years, five years. If they don't come here, I don't think you're going to [inaudible], I don't think you'll get

the access that you could have, and you don't get a sense for what people are asking or what people are listening to. You're out of touch. That's a minimum. It's also an opportunity to delivery your message. So I think you're kind of foolish, especially if you're a community leader, or really any leader, who thinks they're going to be able to figure out how to reach all your people, [inaudible]. How do you not do it more than how do you do it. Does that make sense? It's [inaudible].

Question: Good afternoon, Admiral. I used to be [inaudible] and one of the things I noticed was that when we had Naval Academy students who were [inaudible] and Coast Guard. Now [that's] a program that a lot of people in the Navy said they wanted to stop doing. Is that something that you see [inaudible] Naval Academy, Coast Guard Academy continue in the future? Do you see value in that, the two services working together with our officer corps [inaudible] accession point at the service academies?

Admiral Greenert: The sea services with the Marine Corps, and what we [inaudible] is find out [inaudible] say I want to get into law enforcement or search and rescue, [inaudible] very very effective and broad program. [Inaudible]. I don't have right now a major, major shortage of work areas that we need [inaudible]. We've got [inaudible] our officer corps. And [inaudible] and the Coast Guard is over here. We recently discontinued our [SEAL] program. That [inaudible] fill up, and [inaudible]. I've got these kids that are [SEAL] wannabes and they go over [inaudible] he loses them for a while. You see what I'm saying? And they stay, sometimes never [inaudible]. But generally speaking, that [won't] work.

Question: Sir, thank you for coming. First I want to acknowledge the support that the Navy and the Marine Corps provided in making this conference occur. It would not have been possible if it had not been for your support. So first, I want to thank you for that.

When this organization started 40 years ago one of the main focuses was the lack of officers of color in uniform. Now it's [inaudible] have had some success. One is [inaudible] an organization we're looking at where we move into the civilian community. One of the things we've noticed in the senior levels of DoD and Navy is where is the focus on diversity that's [inaudible] in the United States Navy, and the lack of [inaudible], GS-15s and GS-14s.

Admiral Greenert: That's a good question. I'll take that, I need to go back and talk to the SES [inaudible]. When a community leader comes to talk to me, they're NavAir, you're NavFac, NavSea, we talk about civilians and the lay down . And this is GS, not just the SES. But when I write things like Sailing Directions, I [inaudible] because that's what I'm responsible for [inaudible]. Management wise, community management and development, [inaudible] secretariat. But I think part of [inaudible].

Question: Good afternoon, Admiral. [Inaudible]. Do you foresee having [inaudible] same standards in terms of [inaudible]?

Admiral Greenert: Same standards?

Question: In terms of [inaudible].

Admiral Greenert: Absolutely. If you are of the opinion, and I don't know, that that is well understood and [inaudible]. [Inaudible].

Question: [Inaudible]?

Admiral Greenert: Kids don't understand that they're not trained on equal opportunity, they're not trained on, I think you said sexual [inaudible], that --

Question: [Inaudible], however the [inaudible]. [Inaudible] trained on how to [inaudible], or global [inaudible] in terms of.

Admiral Greenert: It's adaptable. Let me take it back and see. But [inaudible] that we [haven't had] training embedded because people [inaudible].

Question: Good afternoon, Admiral. A lot of the discussion is not only finding [inaudible] diversity wise, but even in [inaudible] with the officers presumably. Is there any thought or action towards reducing the number of Academy and ROTC and increasing your three to six year enlisted commission corps grads ? Those sailors would be invested to at least hit 20 and [inaudible] and keep that diversity in, sir.

Admiral Greenert: Yes, that caters to skill sets. I'm looking for someone -- I think we talked about somebody who might be a machinist's mate at 19, [inaudible] commissioned, [inaudible]. Right? Or are you talking about [inaudible]?

Question: No, sir. I'm talking about a program to [introduce] the [inaudible]. Even ROTC.

Admiral Greenert: When you fill the Academy slots with [inaudible], when you do the ROTC [inaudible]. [Inaudible] OSC and [inaudible]. Enlisted officer program sort of fill up the rest. So there's a balance and an equation there. We can look at it. And actually I've been given other ideas. You should use more of the enlisted officers because you get a richer, more mature person, [and we likely will]. I'll go back and take a look at that because [inaudible] the last four months. Thank you for that.

Question: Good afternoon, sir. Sir, with continued focused on the littoral and the rise of the LCS, will you see a change in the role of [inaudible]?

Admiral Greenert: No. I don't see a change in the role, but [inaudible] for it. There may be more opportunity, more operations for a three-ship [inaudible] group. [Inaudible]. Let me describe it as a [inaudible] separated. You'll have [inaudible] up here and the LCG over here and the LSG over there, in theater, but all trained so they [inaudible] and they come together, instead of a few here and there. That's probably the [inaudible].

Question: Good afternoon, sir. The question I have has to do with sexual assault. I'm in a unique opportunity to defend those that are actually accused of sexual assault. My question is the fact that there's this extreme push and you see a lot of publications about sexual assault,

[inaudible] for individuals where in 72 hours they can get off of their ship or get off of their location. The issue is whether or not there is also a push to train COs and convening authorities to do full-on investigations before pushing it towards courts martial, basically exercising CYA, pushing it towards courts martial instead of actually doing full-on investigations and get the backup in order to make an independent judgment prior to taking it to that extreme, sir.

Admiral Greenert: I don't know if this is going to resonate with what you're looking for. But because of the concern of the Congress on the number of sexual assaults in the military, there were a couple of bills that have come up in the House of Representatives which were going to take the reconciliation, litigation if you will, necessary for sexual assault out of our hands, out of the UCMJ. They said you haven't been handling this right. Very few people are being punished and all that. So we said okay, we don't want that to happen because we think if you go towards only courts martial and in the courts you lose some of the flexibility of evidence [inaudible] and that can get really hard [inaudible].

So we said, and as a result of some, not the best investigations. Some folks are not ready to do, at a certain level that they are handed, to do an investigation involving a sexual assault. They're not equipped to do that very well. So the investigation, when it reaches the [inaudible], there's a lot of questions. And those questions may not be able to be answered now. Now whoever is doing the convening is stuck.

So the rules are headed towards an O6 level commander will do the investigation and do the adjudication. The idea is to raise that to the level of experience and legal experience to be sure that a case is brought forward to reconcile it, that we have an effective, in-depth, deliberate, comprehensive investigation that whoever the convening authority is, they aren't kind of stuck and saying what do I do now [inaudible] this or the other. That's one.

The education piece of the commanders is in progress now. We've completed a training package. We use the same approach and really the same contractor that we used when we did Don't Ask/Don't Tell training. [Inaudible], hey, that was good training. We understood it. We, the commanders, knew how we were supposed to implement this new policy. We wanted to try it the same way because we've got [inaudible].

Where I am, doing the training, the leaders, we want to train sailors to be clear, do you understand what this means, what it is, and how serious it is? The heads nod up and down. Then we're going to hold people accountable. It's going to be a slow [inaudible] of approach. But first we want to make sure people are properly trained so there's no confusion. I believe today we've worked hard [inaudible]. There's not a common reference of understanding of the significant and sometimes [inaudible].

Question: Good afternoon, Admiral. I'm actually aspiring to [inaudible] and [inaudible]. What's your reason for [inaudible]?

Admiral Greenert: Well, [needless] to say, [inaudible]. To take responsibility and the accountability to [inaudible]. That's why I wanted to be an officer. Now I didn't know that when I was 18 years old and I went to the U.S. Naval Academy, but when I got commissioned

and I was on board a ship and I saw these people that I was responsible for, they were coming up and saying what do I do about this, and what do I do about that? These people, if you become an officer, [inaudible] same age as you, you're the same age as [inaudible] people out here. So [inaudible]. The only difference is they're willing to, per se, to say I'll be responsible for that. I'll be responsible, I'll lead. So if you're willing to do that, [inaudible].

Thank you very much for inviting me. I'm honored to appear before you and I appreciate your questions. We have work to do together. I'll try my very best to put out clear guidance to my leadership, [inaudible], the way to do it. You give me your feedback. We'll adjust and we'll forge ahead. Take care.

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